

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRUSSE 04912 140302Z

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 ACDA-10 L-03

NSC-05 EB-07 NRC-07 OES-07 FEA-01 COME-00 /093 W

-----141212Z 121662 /42

R 131818Z MAY 77

FM MEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9852

ERDA WASHDC

ERDA GERMANTOWN

INFO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION IAEA VIENNA

UNCLAS BRUSSELS 04912

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:ENRG,TECH,BE

SUBJECT: PRESS TREATMENT OF INCIDENT AT DOEL II REACTOR

1.THE LARGE CIRCULATION BELGIAN DAILY,LA LIBRE BELGIQUE,
RAN AN ARTICLE ON MAY 12 ENTITLED " WAS THERE AS SERIOUS INCIDENT
AT THE DOEL II NUCLEAR REACTOR?" THIS SOMEWHAT MISLEADING
HEADLINE PRECEDES A STORY ABOUT A COSTLY-- BUT NOT DANGEROUS--
ACCIDENT AT DOE II ,NEAR ANTWERP,THAT RESULTED IN CLOSING

THE REACTOR DOWN FOR SEVERAL WEEKS IN LATE 1976 - EARLY 1977.
THE LA LIBRE BELGIQUE ARTICLE CITES AN AGENCE BELGQ DISPATCH
WHICH SUGGESTED THAT THE ACCIDENT WAS ATTRIBUTABLE TO HUMAN
ERROR DURING THE RECHARGING OF THE REACTOR,POSSIBLY CAUSING
IRREMEDIABLE DAMAGE TO THE REACTOR CORE.A STATEMENT FROM THE
UNION DES EXPLOITATIONS ELECTRIQUES DE BELGIQUE IS ALSO
QUOTED,RACTING TO THE AGENCE BELGA RELEASE,AND
MAINTAINING THAT THE INCIDENT,WHICH TOOK PLACE ON
NOVEMBER 15, 1976,WAS ANNOUNCED THE FOLLOWING DAY; THAT
IT WAS DUE TO A MECHANICAL ERROR RESULTING IN DAMAGE TO
NINE CONTROL RODS (OUT OF A TOTAL 31)); THAT THE INCIDENT
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PROLONGED THE STOPAGE OF THE REACTOR BY ONE AND ONE-HALF
MONTHS; AND THAT DOEL II HAS BEEN OPERATING AT FULL POWER
WITHOUT FURTHER INCIDENT SINCE MID-FEBRUARY.

2.THE LA LIBRE BELGIQUE ARTICLE GOES ON TO DEPLORE THE
"QUASI-APOCALYPTIC VERNON" OF THE INCIDENT AS REPORTED SIX MONTHS
LATER BY AGENCE BELGA,POINTING OUT SEVERAL FACTUAL INACCURACIES

IN THEIR DISPATCH.THE INCIDENT IS REGRETTABLE IN TERMS OF
LOST PRODUCTION AND ADDED COST,BUT,AS A BELGIAN OFFICIAL
HAS TOLD US,THE INCIDENT WAS NO DIFFERENT IN NATURE FROM ONE
THAT MIGHT HAPPEN AT A FOSSIL-FUEL BURNING GENERATING PLANT.
AND,ABOVE ALL,AS EVEN THE AGENCE BELGA ITEM STATES,THE
ACCIDENT DID NOT INVOLVE ANY RADIATION LEAK OR OTHER THREAT
TO HEALTH,SAFETY,OR ENVIRONMENT.DOE II IS A
WESTINGHOUSE-DESIGNED LIGHT WATER REACTOR.
RENNER

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 13-May-1977 12:00:00 am
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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